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Ends Wednesday, December 21, 2011



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event

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[‡]See inside for details.



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POLICE WATCHDOG IS BEING UNDERMINED, OMBUDSMAN SAYS

{page 3}

BELGIANS GRIEVE QUESTIONS LINGER BUT TERRORISM EXCLUDED IN RAMPAGE {pages 14-15}



T-PAIN'S NOT HURTING AUTO-TUNES OUT HIS HATERS {page 24}



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Thursday, December 15, 2011
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News worth sharing.

Ottawa. Crash



► Emergency personnel search for a downed Cessna aircraft near Fallowfield Road at around 8 p.m. last night.

JOE LOFARO/METRO

Two people dead after plane crash

Emergency workers eventually located the plane in a field near the new RCMP headquarters on Leikin Drive. Transportation Safety Board spokesman Chris Krepski says the plane's two occupants were found with fatal injuries after the Cessna went down last night.

City to critic: We're sorry you caught us spying

► Spokesperson refuses to say how Gatineau got personal info on man who complained

The City of Gatineau apologized to a resident yesterday after he noticed city officials were investigating him after he complained about a controversial 16-point guide for new immigrants.

"It's a very unfortunate incident and the city addresses its apologies to Mr. Maghri on behalf of the employee," said City of Gatineau spokesperson, Alain d'Etrement. "This incident shouldn't have happened."

Kamal Maghri told CBC News he planned to file a complaint over the guide, which includes recommendations against cooking smelly foods and bribing officials among other tips on integrating into Canadian society.

"People should be encouraged to engage critically with what the government is doing."

ABBY DESHMAN, CANADIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION

Maghri said that he was mistakenly included in an email chain between city officials who had shared personal information about his finances and difficulty finding employment and the fact he'd arrived in Canada from Morocco after 9-11.

D'Etrement declined to comment on why the city initiated the investigation about Maghri's personal life. ● JOE LOFARO

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

6 Mistakes to Avoid When Moving to a Larger Home



OTTAWA - A new report has just been released which identifies the 6 most common and costly mistakes that homebuyers make when moving to a larger home. Unlike the experience of buying a first home, when you're looking to move-up, and already own a home,

there are certain factors that can complicate the situation. It's very important for you to understand these issues before you list your home for sale. Not only is there the issue of financing to consider, but you also have to sell your present home at exactly the right time in order

to avoid either the financial burden on owning two homes or, just as bad, the dilemma of having no place to live during the gap between closings. In answer to this issue, industry insiders have prepared a free special report entitled "6 Inside Strategies to Avoid

Trade-Up Mistakes." These six strategies will help you put your home on the market in anticipation of moving to a larger home. To get your FREE copy today visit www.MovingUpinOttawa.com or call 613-788-7438.

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Move In April 10, 2012



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The Oakriver Corner, Elev. 'C', 2,097 Sq.Ft.
~~WAS \$412,890~~ NOW \$402,890
Move In April 19, 2012



Single Car Garage Home,
The Baycliffe, Elev. 'A', 1,517 Sq.Ft.
~~WAS \$335,390~~ NOW \$330,390
Move In May 10, 2012



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How the shooting of Ryan Charles played out

The Special Investigations Unit cleared all the Ottawa Police Service officers involved in the June 22 shooting of Ryan Charles and found that the incident occurred as follows.

Two officers stopped Charles after receiving information he was making loud threats that he was going to kill someone.

When police spoke with him, he pointed what looked like a handgun at them. Then he walked into an apartment building at 31 Van Lang Dr. Police radioed for backup.

Charles went into a small room containing the garbage chute on the ninth floor.

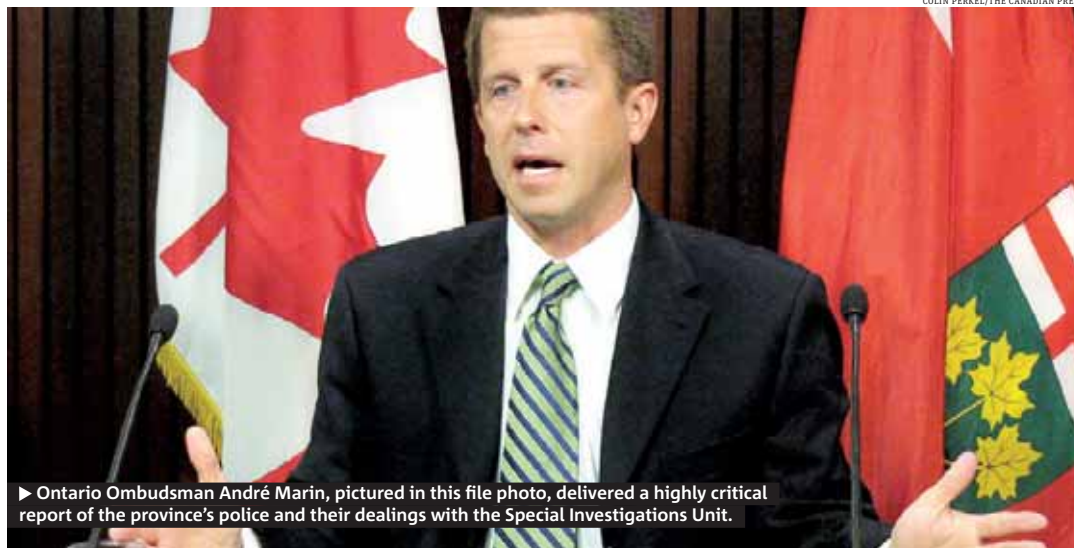
An officer approached the door, opened it and was confronted by Charles. The officer yelled out, "He's got a gun" and "Drop the weapon, drop the weapon."

The subject officer then discharged his firearm twice, striking Charles in his chest area. Charles survived.

The SIU found Charles' gun was a pellet gun, but it resembled a real firearm, so the officer was justified in using potentially lethal force after Charles refused to drop the weapon on his command. ● JESSICA SMITH



For more local news visit metronews.ca/ottawa



► Ontario Ombudsman André Marin, pictured in this file photo, delivered a highly critical report of the province's police and their dealings with the Special Investigations Unit.

Police watchdog being undermined: Official

► Special Investigations Unit conducts criminal investigations into police-civilian incidents involving serious injury, death or sexual assault



JESSICA SMITH
@METRONEWS.CA

An Ottawa police officer shot Ryan Charles twice in the chest in June 2010 — but it's what happened afterwards that was wrong, according to a report released yesterday by Ontario Ombudsman André Marin.

Marin wrote in his report, Oversight Undermined, the provincial government has "actively undermined" its independent police watchdog — the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) — despite his calls to strengthen it with new legislation.

He puts some of the

blame on police, saying the decision not to pass legislation that would empower the SIU in its investigations of police conduct was "largely due to vehement police opposition."

In his report, Marin cited several areas of concern and used examples from many police forces to back them up, including the fallout in Ottawa from the 2010 shooting of Ryan Charles.

SIU investigators found the shooting was justified. However, SIU director Ian Scott said in a press release he was concerned because a lawyer for the police association had spoken with

witness officers before the SIU arrived on scene and one of the cops noted the lawyer had "OK'd" his notes.

Marin wrote Ottawa police Chief Vern White expressed "considerable displeasure" over Scott airing that complaint in public and the assistant deputy attorney general called Scott personally to complain about the news release.

Marin cited the incident as an example of government "systematically" discouraging the SIU from publicly airing complaints about police not complying with its investigations and

of police dismissing the SIU directors repeated concerns about lawyers vetting notes of officers involved in SIU investigations.

Marin wrote that officers notes are important to SIU investigations, and must be prepared independently and promptly, but in reality lawyers often vet them first in SIU cases.

White is currently on leave and was unable to respond to the report for this article. The Ottawa Police Professional Standards Section is in the process of reviewing the Ombudsman's report and will speak with Metro about it once the review is complete.

1

news


The Governor General is seeing to it that 'Eddy' will be the first EduZone mascot in space. Scan the code for the story.

To scan 2D barcodes in Metro, download the free ScanLife app at 2dscan.com.

On the web at metronews.ca

Allan Small explains why investors should be more enticed by the stimulus posture of the U.S. than by the rapid growth of emerging economies. More at metronews.ca/investing



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Woman in bank video cleared

► The release of a security video of an innocent woman doing her banking was not a mistake, Ottawa police say



SEAN
MCKIBBIN
@METRONEWS.CA

Ottawa police have cleared a woman who was captured on a bank security video.

"We've completely cleared her of any wrongdoing," said Detective Robert Reeve of the Ottawa Police Services East Division break and enter unit.

"I've spoken with her and she understands the circumstances."

Police circulated the woman's photo Dec. 7 in a release asking for the public's help cracking a

string of break-ins in the Blackburn Hamlet area.

Reeve said that after the woman was identified and police spoke to her they received new information that led to the arrest of two other people who were not related to the woman.

"We were looking to identify her," said Reeve, who would not comment on what the woman, who was just doing banking, thought of police circulating her picture and alleging erroneously that she was an "accomplice."

Reeve said the release of the woman's photo was

not a mistake, but that police needed to identify people on the security video.

A second photo police released of a man — also from bank security video — did in fact turn out to be one of the people police would eventually charge. A credit card stolen in one of the break-ins was key to leading police to the video of the man.

Police charged Stephen Paquette and Christina Carson — a woman in her 20s — in relation to 40 residential break-ins in the Blackburn Hamlet area Tuesday.

Good. Deed



► Const. Alison Kennedy and 10-year-old Destiny Surratt pay a visit to the Body Shop at Carlingwood shopping mall yesterday.

SEAN MCKIBBIN/METRO

Partners in priming for the holidays

The charitable program that sees police officers paired up with deserving kids on a sponsored \$200 Christmas shopping spree stems from a Halifax shopping centre program that began in 2005. Surratt said she was shopping for her brother and father.

Plasco gets 20-year city contract

City council approved a 20-year waste-to-electricity-conversion contract with plasma gasification firm Plasco yesterday by a vote

of 22-1.

"We want to support a home-grown company that's going to create jobs and offer a better way of

disposing of garbage," said Mayor Jim Watson.

The only dissenting vote was from Somerset Coun. Diane Holmes. ● JESSICA SMITH

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Thieving gets a gym workout

► Someone breaks into a locker and steals a wallet and car keys ► Next, the victim's car is taken for a ride ► And then ... the helpless victim's credit card is used to buy \$5,000 worth of merchandise



Someone broke into a locker at a gym in Orleans and stole a wallet, car keys — and the victim's car.

Not only that ...

The suspect racked up \$5,000 worth of merchandise on the victim's credit cards at Future Shop.

And now Ottawa police are asking the public to help identify a man recorded on a security video.

Police said the locker theft occurred Nov. 26 at The Athletic Club at 3772 Innes Rd.



► Police are asking the public to identify this man captured on a security camera.

The vehicle was later recovered, said police.

A surveillance image shows a middle-aged white

man of average build, with light brown or reddish hair parted in the middle with a moustache and glasses.

He was wearing blue jeans with the pant legs rolled up and he carried a black leather bag, police say.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Const. Jason Degan of the Ottawa Police Service East Division Investigation Section at 613-236-1222, ext. 8597.

You can also call Crime Stoppers at 613-233-8477 (TIPS) or toll free at 1-800-222-8477.

Teens take it personal; stabbing victim goes to hospital

A teenager was taken to hospital with serious but non-life threatening injuries yesterday afternoon after a stabbing in Barrhaven, police said.

Police received a 911 call about 3:37 p.m. and responded to the 100 block of Malvern Drive near John McCrae Secondary School and Jockvale Elementary School.

Four teenagers aged 15 to 17 were involved in an altercation, police said.

Two of the teens sustained minor injuries.

Meanwhile, Ottawa police warned yesterday they are seeing an increase in swarmings.

In 2011 so far, swarmings have increased by 20 per cent over the same period in 2010, police said.

● METRO

Artist. Open-air canvas



► Patrick John Mills works on a painting at Laurier Avenue and Bank Street.

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO

Art takes to the street

Gallery owner Patrick John Mills enjoys painting in the open air, and on the spur of the moment, invited some 500 friends on Facebook to join him yesterday. Two fellow artists took him up on his offer. Now he hopes to hold more art meet-ups — in the open air or at his gallery at 286 Hinchey Ave.



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ROYAL TRIP

Charles, Camilla to visit Canada

The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall will visit Canada next May as part of a year-long celebration leading up to the 60th anniversary



of the Queen's coronation, the federal government announced yesterday.

Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, will tour New Brunswick, Ontario and Saskatchewan during the trip.

Earlier in London, Buckingham Palace announced that the couple will also visit Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Shopping, e-games: Your taxes at work

The Aboriginal Affairs Department called in an auditor after one of its managers went on a wild, taxpayer-funded shopping spree, new documents show. A bureaucrat in the Northwest Territories charged tens of thousands of dollars to government credit cards.

When the misbehaving manager got caught two and a half years into her splurge, she was nearly \$40,000 in the hole.

"Her actions were not impulsive and/or compulsive. They have been found to be premeditated," says a briefing note to top officials. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

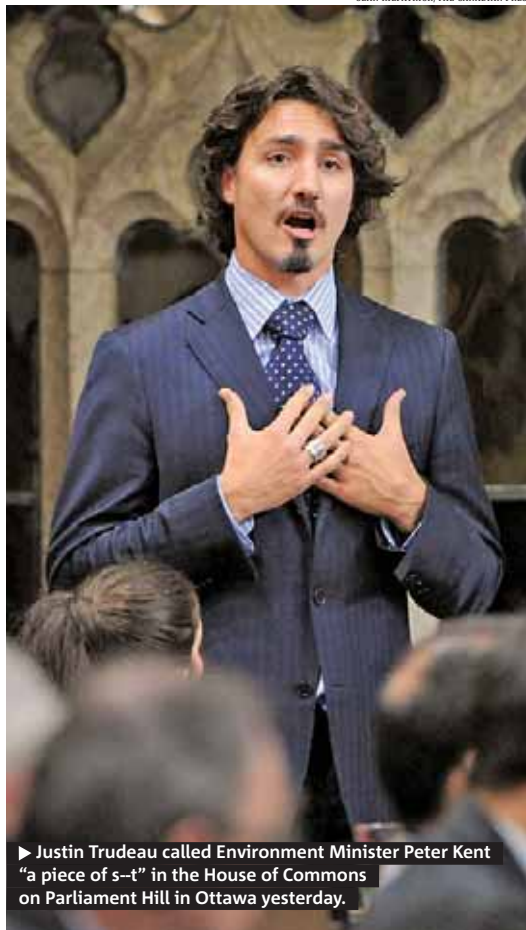
What she bought

Purchases included:

- ▶ **\$4,000 on an online game** called Second Life.
- ▶ **A trip to Las Vegas** in February 2010, where the woman and her husband spent five nights at the Circus Circus hotel and casino at a cost of \$2,000.
- ▶ **Purchases at Walmart**, Northern Fancy Meats and Staples.
- ▶ **Almost \$100 for pizza.**
- ▶ **Cellphone and cable bills.**
- ▶ **On the long list of expenses**, only a \$27 book on how to use PowerPoint was for work.

Trudeau apologizes after swearing at Kent

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS



🔊 Unparliamentary language causes uproar in Commons

His father claimed to have only mouthed “fuddle duddle” during a heated Commons exchange, but a colourful outburst by Justin Trudeau during question period is leaving no room for confusion.

The Liberal MP was heard quite clearly to have called Environment Minister Peter Kent a "piece of s---," causing a momentary uproar in the House yesterday.

Kent had just finished telling his NDP critic Megan Leslie that she was ill-informed about a recent climate-change conference because she hadn't attended. But the government had prevented opposition MPs from being part of the official Canadian delegation.

Following question period, Trudeau rose immediately to apologize.

"I lost my temper and used language that was most decidedly unparliamentary and for that I unreservedly apologize and withdraw my remarks," he said. Kent said he wasn't troubled by the language.

Expletive

- ▶ **It has been a foul-mouthed** season on Parliament Hill.
- ▶ **New Democrat MP Pat Martin** recently used an expletive on Twitter when the government limited debate on its budget bill, and interim Liberal leader Bob Rae referred to “bulls—t” in response to a negative tweet by another Liberal.

but asked that Trudeau apologize to the House of Commons. New Democrat Ryan Creary also got into trouble over language after he called a cabinet minister a “bully.”

Speaker Andrew Scheer suggested he withdraw the comment, but he refused.

"The minister of fisheries and oceans asked a question, he asked this House whether he looked like a bully," Creary said.

"I merely answered his question. I would answer his question the same way if he asked it again."

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News in brief

LYNN CHAMBERLAIN/UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE SERVICES/AP



► A surviving grebe.

Birds drown in parking lot

CRASH LANDING. Thousands of birds died on impact after apparently mistaking a Walmart parking lot and areas of southern Utah for bodies of water and plummeting to the ground in what one wildlife expert called the worst downing she's ever seen.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Google works to end slavery

RECORD GRANT. Tech giant Google announced

yesterday it is donating \$11.5 million to several coalitions fighting to end the modern-day slavery of some 27 million people around the world.

It is believed to be the largest-ever corporate grant devoted to the advocacy, intervention and rescue of people being held, forced to work or provide sex against their will. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Freak accident kills woman

DEATH BY DRAGGING. A woman was killed in a freak elevator mishap yesterday around 10 a.m. in a 26-storey office tower near Grand Central Terminal. The woman was stepping onto the elevator on the first floor when either her foot or leg became caught in the closing doors. The car then rose abruptly, dragging her body into the shaft and killing her, officials said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police shave, arrest punks to teach lesson

► Muslim hardliners cut off mohawks of rock fans to enforce moral values ► Police crack down on 'disgusting' lifestyle

Police in Indonesia's most conservative province raided a punk-rock concert and detained dozens of fans, buzzing off their spiky mohawks and stripping away body piercings because of the perceived threat to Islamic values.

Dog-collar necklaces and chains were taken from the youths before they were thrown in pools of water for "spiritual" cleansing, local police Chief Iskandar Hasan said yesterday.

After replacing their "disgusting" clothes, he handed each a toothbrush and barked "use it."

The crackdown marked the latest effort by authorities to promote strict moral



► In this photo, punks sit inside a pool in a police school compound after their heads were shaved in Aceh Besar, Aceh province, Indonesia.

values in Aceh, the only province in this secular but predominantly Muslim na-

tion of 240 million to have imposed Islamic laws. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Police story

- **Baton-wielding police** scattered fans, many of whom had travelled from other parts of the sprawling archipelagic nation to attend the show.
- **Police said 59 young men and five women** were loaded into vans and brought to a police detention centre.
- **They would spend 10 days** getting rehabilitation, training in military-style discipline and religious classes, including Qur'an recitation, police officials said. Afterward, they'll be sent home.
- **While the men's heads were shaved,** the women, some in tears, were given short, blunt bobs.

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Cyber-hate fuels free-speech debate

► Human-rights law under review, pitting advocates against defenders of free speech

A section of Canada's human-rights code that protects against hate speech on the Internet is under attack on two fronts just as three accused neo-Nazis in British Columbia face charges of vicious, racist assaults.

An appeal got underway in Federal Court in Toronto this week scrutinizing Section 13 of the Human Rights Act, which says it's discriminatory to spread hate messages online. The case pits human-rights advocates against defenders of free expression.

Meanwhile, federal Tories are seeking to kill the provision via a private member's bill in the House of Commons.

But those who keep an

Hate on the rise

The Internet now disseminates the racists' rallying call, said Richard Warman, one of three parties in the appeal case. He contends Section 13 must stay intact.

► Statistics Canada found Canadian police forces reported a rise of 42 per cent in hate-based incidents in 2009, as compared to 2008, and more than half were based on race.

eye on incidents of hate are worried that if those provisions of the act are killed, Canada could see more incidents like the setting on fire of a Filipino

man in Vancouver.

Police recently announced the arrests of two men in their 20s and a 30-year-old in connection with that assault and three others against minorities in Vancouver. Investigators allege the trio are members of Blood and Honour, a white-supremacist group.

Other proponents of free speech want the law axed. "The best defence against so-called 'hate speech' is not government enforcement of vague prohibitions, but an educated and alert citizenry and vigilant and responsible media," Charles Foran, president of PEN Canada, said in a news release.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sexual. Slavery



► Kil Un-ock, right, a former South Korean comfort woman who was forced to serve the Japanese Army as a sexual slave during Second World War, shouts slogans in Seoul yesterday, demanding an official apology and compensation from the Japanese government.

LEE JIN-MAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Comfort women demand apology

Protesters in Seoul placed a statue of a girl representing victims of Japanese Second World War-era sexual slavery in front of the Japanese Embassy yesterday as South Korean President Lee Myung-bak prepared to visit Tokyo.

Fraternity under investigation

A University of Vermont fraternity has been suspended while officials investigate allegations that it

circulated a survey that asked members who they would like to rape.

Members of the Ver-

mont chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon would not discuss the allegations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Belgians grieve after bloodbath

► Government pledges to toughen gun law, put stricter controls on multiple offenders on conditional release

A card at a memorial to the victims asked the question haunting all of Belgium: "Why?"

Why did Nordine Amrani, a 33-year-old with a history of lawbreaking, sweep into this city's holiday shopping centre to unleash a grenade-and-gun rampage that killed three people and wounded 123 others? Why did he then kill himself?

Deepening the mystery, police announced yesterday that another body had been found, that of a 45-year-old woman, in a shed where Amrani grew cannabis close to his home. Liege prosecutor

"We are all Liegeois, united in suffering.... This was an act of a sick man."

ADELIE MIGUEL, 48, WHO PLACED A BOUQUET OF WHITE TULIPS AGAINST THE SHATTERED BUS STOP

Daniele Reynders said, after searches of Amrani's house, terrorism could be excluded.

"It was a cleaning lady. This is how she met him yesterday morning," she said. "She dies, shot with a bullet in the head."

The Ferris Wheel at Liege's Christmas market started turning again yes-

terday, hoping to restore some festive cheer, but the mood remained black as the coal that once drove this rust-belt city in eastern Belgium.

"The crowds won't show up," said Francoise Robert, a vendor selling miniature castles and Christmas items. "People are scared."

The victims included a one-year-old toddler and two teenage boys, both students.

Five others are reported in critical condition.

Beyond the dead and injured, Reynders said 40 other people had to be treated for psychological trauma. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



► People leave tributes at the site of Tuesday's gun and grenade attack in central Liege, Belgium, yesterday.

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One in four women abused in U.S.

One in four U.S. women say they have been hit hard, kicked or otherwise violently attacked by their intimate partners, according to a government survey released yesterday that offers startling findings about domestic violence.

The new national look at how many women say they've been abused offers some numbers that are higher than previous reports.

One expert called the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's report's estimate on rape and attempted rape "extremely high" — with one in five women saying they were victims. About half of those cases involved intimate partners. But advocates say rape has been vastly underreported in the past and the new numbers are plausible.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Violence

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report is based on a randomized telephone survey of 9,000 women.

As many as 29 million women say they have suffered severe and frightening physical violence from a boyfriend, spouse or other intimate partner. That

includes being choked, beaten, stabbed, shot, punched, slammed against something or hurt by hair-pulling.

That number grows to 36 million if slapping, pushing and shoving are also counted.

Almost half of the women who reported rape or attempted rape said it happened when they were 17 or younger.

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Shafia son ends day with hug request

► After testifying on behalf of parents accused of murdering sisters, youth asks judge permission to hug parents ► Crown accused man of lying to officials

After a lengthy cross-examination during which he was accused of conspiring with his family to fabricate alibis, a son of a couple accused of killing their three daughters finished his testimony by asking for a hug.

The son of a Montreal couple accused along with their other son of committing honour killings, testified this week for the

defence at the Shafia family murder trial and was subject to more than a full day of cross-examination.

Crown attorney Gerard Laarhuis suggested that the son, who can't be named due to a court order, has lied to and manipulated authority figures before and may not have been telling the truth on the stand, saying his memory seems to be

selectively improving to remember details that help his parents and brother.

Tooba Yahya, 42, her husband Mohammad Shafia, 58, and their eldest son, Hamed, 20, are charged with four counts of first-degree murder. They have each pleaded not guilty. They're accused of killing sisters, Zainab, 19, Sahar, 17, and Geeti, 13,

along with Rona Mohammad, 52, Shafia's other wife in a polygamous marriage, over family honour.

Moments later, after the judge told him he could step down, the son asked Judge Robert Maranger if he could hug his parents to which Laarhuis referenced ongoing discussions and said, "Now's not the time." **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



► Mohammad Shafia, Hamed Shafia and Tooba Mohammad Yahya arrive at the Frontenac County courthouse in Kingston yesterday.

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News in brief

Toyota Venza
on top for theft

CAR CRIME. Bad news for Toyota Venza owners — the 2009 edition of the crossover SUV is the new hot target for Canadian car thieves.

The model tops the Insurance Bureau of Canada's top 10 most frequently stolen vehicles. It replaces the 2000 Honda Civic SiR, last year's No. 1 stolen vehicle, which has dropped to third place.

In at second is the 1999 Honda Civic SiR two-door, while the 2006 Ford F350 Pickup Truck 4WD takes fourth place and the 2002 Cadillac Escalade EXT four-door AWD is in fifth place.

The ICC says high-end vehicles are often targeted by criminal organizations that strip them for parts or resell them to unsuspecting consumers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadians watch
more online

VIDEOS. Every day, the average Canadian Internet user spends about an hour watching 10 videos online, according to measurement firm comScore. Once again, comScore named Canadians as the most avid viewers of online video, with users aged 15 and older watching an average of 303.7 videos in October. This amount has doubled since October 2010.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Easier to connect
with WestJet

AIRLINES. WestJet Airlines Ltd. has signed an interline deal with Japan Airlines making it easier for passengers to connect between the two airlines. Travellers will link from Japan Airlines flights landing in Vancouver, and then connect to WestJet flights within Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mobile banking ready to rise

SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Nearly 3 million Canadians are
checking balances via their phones

Most Canadians still aren't pulling out their phones to check their bank account balances and pay bills but experts and users alike expect a whole lot more will be doing so in 2012.

"We definitely see there's been humongous growth on the banking front on the phone platform," says Bryan Segal, vice-president of the digital measurement firm comScore.

Canadians are among the world's leaders when it comes to embracing online and mobile banking, according to comScore. Last year, Canada ranked as the top country for online banking usage, with almost 65 per cent of our Internet users going on the web

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each month to check their accounts.

More recently, comScore estimated there were about



▶ A smartphone user tracks mortgage payments with an online banking app from CIBC.

13.3 million Canadians regularly doing online banking, compared to 63.6 million in the U.S.

Segal says about 13 per cent of Canada's mobile users access their banking on their phone on a month-

ly basis, which is roughly on par with the U.S. market and ahead of the EU. According to a Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association survey, the biggest concern is security.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Norway struggles to butter it up this Christmas

High demand for butter used in traditional Norwegian Christmas dishes has caused a big shortage, leading the government to

slash import duties on the cherished product.

Butter consumption has steadily increased in the Scandinavian country this

year, partly because of the nation's increased popularity of low-carb but fat-rich diets. Growth in demand peaked at more than 30 per

cent last month, compared with November 2010.

That has caused empty shelves nationwide.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Witness 'pretty
sure' Murdoch
was aware
of hacking

A former top lawyer for Rupert Murdoch's British newspapers insisted yesterday that he told the mogul's son there was evidence of widespread phone hacking more than three

years before the scandal.

Tom Crone questioned claims made by James Murdoch — chairman of News International, the British arm of his father's media empire — that he had not been fully informed that hacking was rife. Crone told Britain's media inquiry he was "pretty sure" that he showed Murdoch an email that included transcripts of illegally

intercepted voice mail messages in 2008. News International insisted the illegal accessing of the voice messages was confined to reporter Clive Goodman. But in July, the tabloid was closed amid public outrage over the disclosure that reporters had hacked the phone of a missing schoolgirl, Milly Dowler, who was later found murdered.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadians
cushioned for
gift-giving: TD

TD Canada Trust says Canadians have built up a financial cushion for the holidays. The bank says a recent survey suggests 53 per cent were setting aside at least 10 per cent of each paycheck.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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IGNORING KYOTO, ONE LESS COUNTRY AT A TIME

HE SAYS ...

JOHN MAZEROLLE
METRO



I, for one, was inspired by the Kyoto Protocol, which ushered in a bold new era in which countries throughout the world put aside their differences and worked

together to ignore the Kyoto Protocol. It's rare you see that kind of teamwork outside of arms deals.

The Conservatives pulled Canada out of Kyoto this week, and it would be easy to mock them (fun, too), but this is a failure we all share in.

When the Kyoto deal was signed in 1997, we talked about the deal as if something really exceptional had happened that would unite humanity — like the end of nuclear weapons or a Saved by the Bell reunion special.

We were breathlessly told that we'd be able to breathe again, all thanks to 160 signatories sending the amount of greenhouse gases back to the halcyon days of the 1980s.

The U.S., showing its usual world leadership, got the failure started when George W. Bush said the protocol was "economically irresponsible" — a description that looked a little short-sighted when New Orleans did its

imitation of the SpongeBob SquarePants mise-en-scène.

At the time, Canada took its usual official diplomatic position toward the U.S. of being smug. According to WikiLeaks, Paul Martin's official cable to the U.S. was "Tsk, tsk, tsk." Canada's greenhouse-gas record was as bad as America's but we left that part out, as one does.

Some blame goes to the accord's writers, too: We should have known Kyoto was doomed as soon as we heard there were environmental "credits" that could be used to offset actually helping the environment — a sort of frequent-polluter points card. Getting out of pollution standards because you are planting trees, say, seems to me like getting out of a speeding ticket in the morning because you plan to drive under the speed limit in the afternoon.

Finally, of course, there's you. Did you do anything worthy of an environmental award since 1997? Recycling and composting only gets you a Certificate of Attendance.

Global warming is too slow, too subtle for humans. Us rats, we don't understand risk-reward if the electric shock comes decades later.

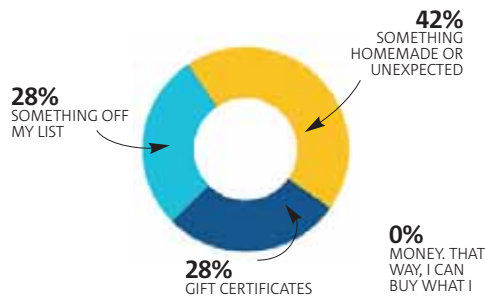
I'm still hopeful. Everyone seems to value the environment, even if they weren't on board for Kyoto. One-hundred-and-sixty countries failed in Japan, but it could be different now. If we really believe, we could get 190, maybe 200 countries on the road to probable failure this time. When it comes to world diplomacy, this is progress. (Deep breaths, everyone. Deep breaths.)

Read more of John Mazerolle's columns at metronews.ca/hesays



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and take the quick poll

What type of gift do you prefer to receive?



Local tweets



► @nuisance_beaver: oh justin, remember lessons of your father pierre. never apologize, just say it was fuddle duddle. #trudeauheritage #would-makehisfatherproud

► @TondaMacC: Ok, much ado in gallery to Kent's re-tort that Megan Leslie shld've bn in Durban. Someone said "u piece of s--t"

► @stephen_taylor: Looking forward to Justin Trudeau's anti-bullying video

#cdnpoli

► @kitchissippikid: @justin-pjtudeau Nothing partisan, but the language doesn't impress.

► @PWAMenear: @justinjtudeau I realize you had to apologize for the breach of decorum...still, good for you! Peter Kent's an ass and a bully.

► @CDHilton: Is it possible that @justinprudeau understands #cdnpoli better than most and just got an afternoon of free media on the environment?

Daily Zoom



All quiet on the Baghdad front

U.S. leaving Iraq via Kuwait route

KUWAIT. U.S. army soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division walk to a waiting bus as they leave customs for a ride to the airport to fly back to Fort Hood, Texas. They exited Iraq yesterday at Camp Virginia in Kuwait City. President Obama is meeting Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to ceremonially mark the end of the war.

● METRO WORLD NEWS



"On behalf of a grateful nation, I'm proud to finally say these two words — welcome home."

BARACK OBAMA TOLD CHEERING TROOPS AT FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA

150,000 American troops were present in Iraq when Obama took office. Within 15 days, there will be zero left. Some 4,483 U.S. soldiers have died in Iraq since the conflict started, while nearly 30,000 have been injured. The Iraq war cost the U.S. approximately \$1 trillion.

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FIRST TEAM. The 1st Cavalry Division contains over 18,000 soldiers and is regarded as the most famous heavy-armoured combat division in the American army. The unit has been deployed in Korea, Vietnam, Operation Desert Storm, Yugoslavia and the war in Afghanistan, also known as Operation Enduring Freedom.

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2 scene

Oscar



The Academy Award Orson Welles won for writing the classic film *Citizen Kane* will be sold to the highest bidder. Auctioneer Nate D. Sanders plans to sell the Oscar statuette on Dec. 20.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Downey meets his match as 'Holmes' sequel resurrects grand-dad of super-villains Moriarty

Scratch beneath the Vinyl

► Stuart McLean, host of radio program *The Vinyl Café*, taping shows in Ottawa this weekend

BACKSTAGE PASS

JEN TRAPLIN
METRO OTTAWA



Canadian storyteller and best-selling author Stuart McLean brings his hugely popular CBC Radio show to life here in the Nation's Capital this weekend.

McLean, who recently released his ninth book, *Vinyl Café Notebooks*, will be taping shows at the National Arts Centre for future broadcasts.

As part of *The Vinyl Café Christmas Tour 2011*, audiences can expect lots of new stories as well as music by Juno Award winning musician Hawksley Workman and *The Vinyl Café Orchestra*.

"It's the stage version of the radio show, but bigger and better," explains McLean in his friendly and familiar voice. "As well as the stories and the music, there are other fun things that we can only do on stage that we can't do on the radio."

As host of *The Vinyl Café*, McLean has captivated audiences across Canada since 1994 with his insight into music, unique essays and tales of Dave, a record store owner, and his wife Morley.

About half the shows recorded for *The Vinyl Café* every season are

Details

Find out about the event and where you can participate.

► **When:** Saturday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

► **Where:** National Arts Centre (53 Elgin St.)

► **Price:** Tickets from \$35 through the NAC Box Office

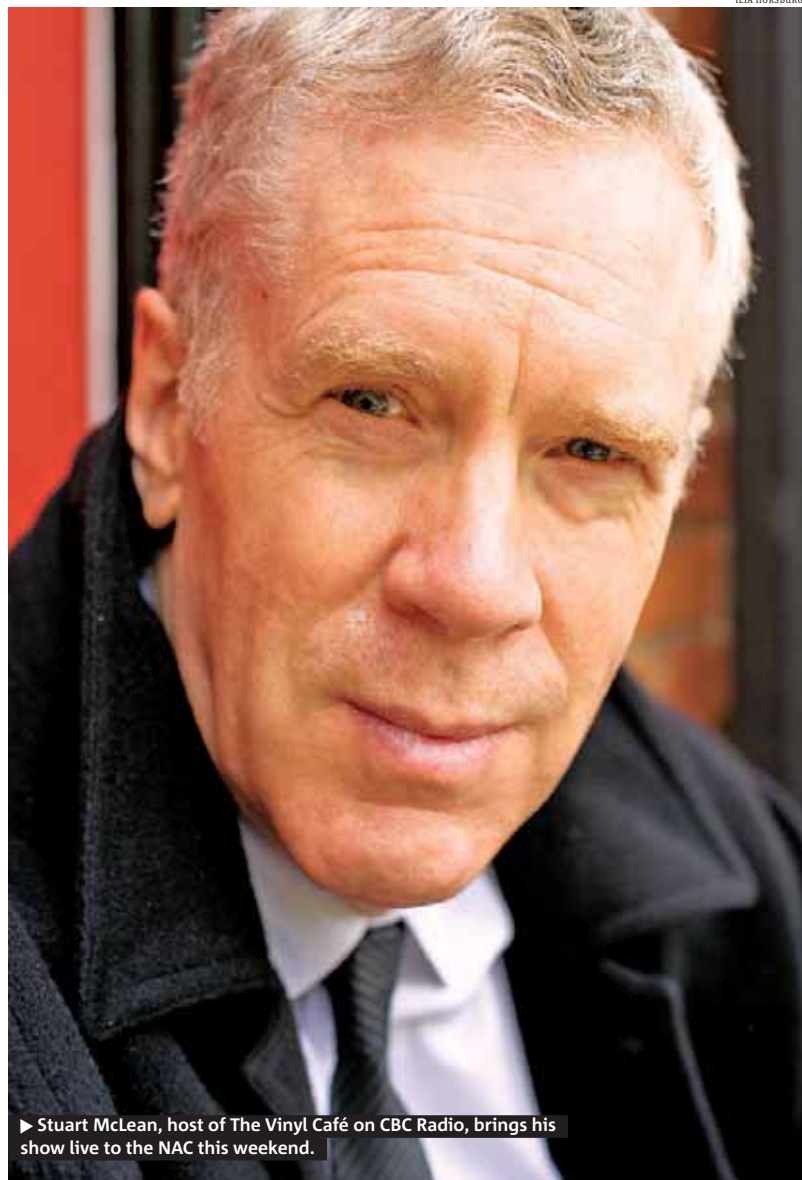
taped live on the road and often start with commentary about the host city.

When it comes to Canada's Capital, McLean, who admits he has a great respect for the Parliamentary institution, has nothing but good things to say.

"I come to Ottawa and I immediately start thinking of the country as a whole," he says. "I see the bigger part of Canada in Ottawa; the town embodies that. So when I go skating on the Canal, I think of the Prairies. When I stand in front of the Commons, I think of the West Coast. When I listen to the English language mingling with French, I think of our cultural heritage."

And that, he says, makes the Capital a great fit for his radio show.

"I love coming to Ottawa because, really, it's the perfect town for *The Vinyl Café* to be in," boasts McLean. "I think it represents the best of Canada."



► Stuart McLean, host of *The Vinyl Café* on CBC Radio, brings his show live to the NAC this weekend.



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Saving victims to biting them

► Chris Meloni, who ended 12-year run on Law & Order, to join HBO's vampire drama True Blood ► Try a taste

HBO says Law and Order veteran Chris Meloni will be sinking his teeth into a role on vampire drama True Blood.

The network confirmed yesterday that Meloni will be joining the popular series as an ancient, powerful vampire who controls the fate of the show's major characters.

The series' fifth season is expected to air next summer. Its stars include Anna Paquin and Stephen Moyer.

Meloni recently ended a 12-year run on NBC's Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, where he played Detective Elliot Stabler.

Before that, the 50-year-



► Chris Meloni

old actor was a regular as a bisexual inmate on HBO's gritty prison drama, Oz. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



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New episodes post every Tuesday and Thursday. Watch at www.facebook.com/OriginalsTheSeries



Dirt off your shoulder

► T-Pain brushes off his critics with laughs and lots of hits

T-Pain knows that whatever he does — including his latest album, *rEVOLVER*, which he calls the best record he's ever done — there will be people who will just dismiss him as that Auto-Tune guy.

It doesn't bother him though. While it may be a blow to his ego, he soothes the slams with his ever-hearty laugh — and a glance at his chequebook.

"Say what you wanna say — I'm still rich," he said, chuckling while sitting in his tour bus.

"It's not going to change anything."

Indeed, nothing seems to have derailed the 27-year-old singer and producer and his hit-making magic since he made his debut with songs like *I'm Sprung* and *I'm N Luv* (Wit a Stripper) in 2005. Those songs started a platinum-chain reaction of hits, including *Buy U a Drank*, *Can't Believe It and Good Life* with Kanye West, which earned him one of his two Grammy Awards.

His reliance on Auto-Tune, the vocal aide that

"Say what you wanna say — I'm still rich."

T-PAIN

gives a computerized effect to his voice, became his signature sound. Its use grew so ubiquitous with other acts that it sparked a backlash.

Jay-Z famously declared D.O.A. (Death of Auto-Tune), but it still thrives. In fact, T-Pain's app that lets people add that effect to their voice is a popular one.

Speaking last month on the night of his final concert as the opening act for Chris Brown's F.A.M.E. tour, T-Pain was weary as he waited for his moment onstage. But through laughs, he had enough energy to talk about his latest album, his critics and the truth in his music.

Have you ever considered not using Auto-Tune because of all the criticism?

No. It made me do it more, just to annoy the hell out of people (laughs). ... It made me realize that when I

don't use it, people don't pay attention to them songs. I've got a song on every album, two songs as a matter of fact on every album without Auto-Tune, and that's the song that nobody talks about. It's weird. And like my biggest hit, the

biggest hit song I had, the longest-running song was Flo Rida's *Low*, and that didn't have Auto-Tune on it at all, and people had no idea. They just feel like anytime they hear me, it's going to be Auto-Tune. Anytime people read my tweets, they hear it in

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► T-Pain's latest album, *rEVOLVER*, was released last week.

Auto-Tune. It's weird. I don't know (laughing).

How have you grown performing in the spotlight, dealing with criticism?

Most of the blogs and stuff, it's just their opinion. It's just that one person. They didn't ask anybody else how they felt. ... It's just their opinion, and I can ask anybody that. It doesn't have to be a journalist. I can just go on Twitter and say, "Hey guys, how did I do tonight?" (Laughs.) That's what I look to, I look to the people who actually came there for a concert, and not somebody who came there looking for some bad stuff

to say, because that's what's interesting, that's what makes your blog interesting.

Does this record represent a different T-Pain?

It's a really different T-Pain. It's a more confident T-Pain on the album, but I'm like scared. I don't know what to do. I don't know how this is gonna work out. This album is really good, though. It's so good that I went back just to listen to all of my other albums, and I was like, I don't know why I thought people would like that. It's bad. It's like, such a difference.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'We both actually cried while writing the song'

Miranda Lambert is paying tribute to husband Blake Shelton's late brother with her new single, *Over You*.

Richie Shelton died in a car accident in 1990. The newlyweds wrote the song together about a year ago, and Lambert recorded it for her latest album *Four the Record*. It is the second single released from the album.

The song idea started on a tour bus as they were flipping through TV channels.

Shelton's *Backstory* happened to be re-airing on *Great American Country* (GAC), and it was at the part where his dad was talking about his brother's fatal crash. His father said: "You don't ever get over something like that. You just get used to it."

The couple turned the

TV off and started talking.

"Miranda never had a chance to meet my brother," Shelton said recently. "I was just a teenager when that happened. So I was telling her about him, what he was like, and we just ended up like we do sometimes, writing a song."

Richie was only 24 when he died. Shelton was 14 at the time.

This was the first time Shelton, now 35, really opened up to Lambert about the tragedy.

"We both actually cried while writing the song," said Lambert, 28.

"That's the only time I've ever gotten that emotional writing a song, and him, too. So, I think the initial emotion came out right that day, and I think you hear it in the lyrics."

Some of the lines are



► Married country singers Blake Shelton and Miranda Lambert arrive at November's Annual CMA Awards in Nashville, Tenn.

"That to me, that's what I'm supposed to do as a country artist, a country songwriter, is take a real-life situation that is emotional and make it into music."

BLAKE SHELTON ON THE SONG *OVER YOU*

pulled directly from Shelton's experience. Lambert sings, "Your favourite records make me feel better, cause you sing along with every song. I know you didn't mean to give them to me."

"That's one of the things I got when my brother was killed. The family gave me all his albums and things like that," Shelton said.

"I just listened to them

over and over again to feel like he was there."

Shelton said Richie loved all kinds of music, from Hank Williams Jr. to MC Hammer.

He still has his brother's *No Fences* album by Garth Brooks and says Richie's favourite song at the time was *Friends In Low Places*.

The songwriting process helped Lambert and Shelton grow as a couple. Lambert calls it the most real song she's ever had.

"It was really a great moment between us. It was like we moved to a deeper level, not just in our relationship, but also, we respect each other as artists, and being able to write something that personal with each other was really cool," she said.

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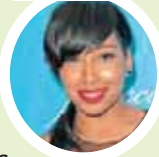
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Celebrity tweets



@OfficialMelB

ok so i think i'm d efoo going with the video xmas card,ok family lets get this done in the next week or so,will keep you guys posted!



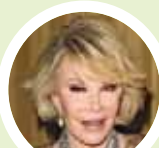
@lindsaylohan

Is this for real??? My friend has a trained cheetah in his car ... That's nuts!!!!!!



changing my twitter name isn't a top

priority right now. sorry it bothers so many of u. should I not tweet until I do?does it really matter?



@Joan_Rivers

We Jews decorate

differently for Christmas. Our manger scenes are typically set in a Chinese restaurant.

LiLo bails on Ellen, 'delayed in Hawaii'

► Star cancels spot on talk show ► Producers score Paris Jackson instead

THE WORD

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONews.ca



Remember that "exclusive" interview Lindsay Lohan was going to do on Ellen — the only media appearance she agreed to do to promote her new Playboy magazine spread? Well, she missed it. Of course she did!

Her rep says the reason she didn't make the show was because she "was delayed in Hawaii due to a travel-related issue. Lindsay offered to tape Ellen tomorrow, but the show was unable to shift things around, and tomorrow is their last day of taping for the season." The show's producers are less than pleased, according to Gossip Cop. "Not a call or an apology from



► Lindsay Lohan

Lindsay," a source close to the show says.

However, the producers scored a coup de grace and got Paris Jackson (Michael Jackson's oldest child) to fill in for Lohan in her first solo

television appearance, which will air on Thursday. The 13-year-old talked about her new film role in the fantasy film *London's Bridge* and the *Three Keys*. She says her decision to act

was due to her father. "My dad was in the movie *Moonwalker* and I knew he could sing really well, but I didn't know he could act. I saw that and I said, 'Wow, I want to be just like him.'"

Angie still loves her some Brad

While six kids may seem like plenty, Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt aren't necessarily done building their family.

"Nothing planned at the

moment, but we just don't know," Jolie tells *Marie Claire* magazine.

"I could end up pregnant."

In the meantime, she's

got plenty of nice things to say about the man in her life.

"[Brad] has expanded my life in ways I never imagined. We built a family.

"He is not just the love my life, he is my family. I hold that very dear," Jolie says.

● METRO



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"I recognize in myself a lot of my strengths have come from him and indeed the way I decorate. Whether it's interiors, whether it's a collection of fragrances or whether it's fine jewelry."

INDIA HICKS ON HER FATHER, RENOWNED DECORATOR AND DESIGNER DAVID HICKS

India Hicks hasn't drifted far from the flashbulbs since she was thrust into the global spotlight three decades ago as a teen bridesmaid in Charles and Diana's royal wedding.

The goddaughter of the Prince of Wales earned a degree in photography before moving in front of the lens as a sought-after model, featured by the likes of Ralph Lauren, Banana Republic and Bill Blass.

The London-born Hicks

makes her home in the Bahamas with partner David Flint Wood and their four children, but continues to expand her brand.

She has launched an e-commerce arm of her island lifestyle boutique The Sugar Mill, has teamed with Crabtree and Evelyn on two collections of bath and beauty products and penned a book on inspirational interiors and another on fitness and natural beauty.

Her foray into designing fine jewelry seems a

fitting addition to Hicks' style-centred resumé and reflective of her rich pedigree.

Indeed, family played a figurative role in the decision to put her stamp on a signature jewelry collection — perhaps most notably her father, the late David Hicks.

The renowned interior decorator and designer was known for his strong use of colour and geometric designs in carpets and textiles, and his signature esthetic is where Hicks draws inspiration for her creations.

"We may have had a tricky relationship because he was quite a tricky chap, (but) a brilliant designer and a fascinating person," Hicks said in an interview last week in Holt Renfrew's offices.

"As a father, he was a perfectionist and he had a



ALL PHOTOS PAWEŁ DWULIT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

very strong point of view on how things were going to be done. So there were definitely times as a child where it was intimidating and life could have possibly been a little more relaxed on occasion.

"But nevertheless, I recognize in myself a lot of my strengths have come from him and, indeed, the way I decorate. Whether it's interiors, whether it's a collection of fragrances or

whether it's fine jewelry, there's a lot of influence from my father."

Her mother is Lady Pamela Hicks, daughter to the Earl and Countess Mountbatten of Burma.

Hicks took part in an in-store meet-and-greet with customers at Holt Renfrew's downtown flagship store last week where her jewelry collection will be carried exclusively in Canada.

The 44-year-old said there's much more she'd like to tackle in the style domain, but she wants to ensure she maintains her responsibilities balancing motherhood with work.

She also seeks to be prudent in lending her name and energy to a project she sees as having longevity.

"You want a collection that, firstly, you know is going to stand the test of time, you know is actually a good product, you know will have an audience that will be willing to buy it and invest in it and follow you," she said. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Thank you India

Hicks acs accessories:

▶ The Hicks on Hicks collection of sterling silver and diamond pieces features her father's famous hexagonal pattern with a modern, architectural influence seen in cuffs, earrings, necklaces and statement rings.

▶ Her sea-inspired Island Life collection includes starfish wrap cuffs and rings, fish-tail earrings and shimmering shell-shaped pendants.

Gift pick

Lovebullets

Lovebullets jewelry, the label that's championed by singers Lily Allen and Cheryl Cole gives a percentage of its profits to Warchild, who support children in conflict zones like Iran. **NEWS**



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Jeanne Space

In this hectic modern world, Twitter has become a cool and succinct way of communicating. It allows me to be accessible, instantly speak my mind, and connects me with all kinds of people. Whether it's a fashion question, or you just want to comment on life's bigger picture, I'd love to hear from you.



@Jeanne_Beker:

When my kids were small I gave them cozy new flannel pj's every xmas eve so they'd be wearing them xmas morning. What will YOU be wearing?

► @toniaantonietta: Wow, I gave both my girls the same thing. Now, in their twenties what do I give them?

► @Jeanne_Beker: My girls are in their 20s too. Think I'm going to revive the tradition!!

► @patricktustin: I want to find a flannel one-piece that will fit my 6 foot frame hahaha

► @Jeanne_Beker Oh yeah...with a "trap door" in the back, right? Good luck!!

► @Linny_Bop you are never too old for Christmas pj's! My mom still buys @MaMi_Kris and I a pair every year & we are 30 & 27 :) #traditions

► @Jeanne_Beker Yay! Think I'll get my kids PJ's again this year too!!!



► @Jeanne_Beker: Decking the halls (and tree) with @joeyoneil + my cool son-in-law Keith! Eggnog anyone??

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No room? There's still a place for that tree

► Think outside the decoration box ► Karl Lohnes invents new ways to add festive flair to the smallest of spaces

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Question: I live in a really small

space and have no room to add a Christmas tree. How can I add a festive look to my small condo that won't take up the floor space?
Andrea Nichols, Vancouver

Answer: I suggest looking at ways to add fresh or artificial greenery to the walls or a door rather than taking up floor

space.

First thing to do is inquire with your condo to see if fresh greens and trees are allowed (very often they are not), especially when electrical lights are being added.

Not only are they considered a fire hazard, but the cleaning of dried needles and removal of the

tree after the holidays is often a concern.

Artificial greens are a great alternative; they look realistic, are fire-retardant and last from year to year.

Look for outdoor artificial greenery. Larger-scaled wreaths and garlands can also help add a bigger impact.



► Outdoor Pine Wreath with decorations; \$99, Pottery Barn

Do up your door

Link three wreaths vertically on a door so they can be viewed from a common spot in your condo. Use over-door wreath hangers to hang the wreaths.

Arranging the smallest on top to largest on bottom will give you a traditional tree shape or stacking

same-sized wreaths will add a contemporary flair.

Use battery operated mini lights to illuminate the wreaths to allow the door to swing open and closed.

For real fun, paint the door a shiny bright red colour or cover it in a big-scaled holiday wrapping paper.

Christmas in a corner

Choose an artificial half or corner tree. This will give you the look of a tree but without the bulk of a full one.

I suggest buying a four-six foot tree and standing it on a skirted decorator table to give it height and allow it to look super tall and majestic.

With only half or a quarter-sized tree to decorate, fill it with tons of ornaments that are all related by colour.

Some great colour combinations would be: brown and orange, lime green and gold or red and turquoise.



► Noel Avenue Corner Tree; \$90, Sears

Get creative

► If you have a balcony, decorate an artificial tree with tons of coloured lights and outdoor ornaments to view through the patio door while inside.

► Replace your living room table lamps with small pre-

lit and potted trees during the holidays. The soft light will add a warm glow to the room.

► Fill an umbrella stand with tall dogwood branches and add mini lights. This can be a tall and contemporary alternative to the standard bulky tree.



► Faux long-needed garlands, ornaments and candles on a mantel add an instant holiday focal point to any room.

Festive reflections

Frame a large floor standing mirror with garlands, ornaments and lights.

To do this effectively, you have to go big with the gar-

lands. Buy about 50 feet of garland; this will allow you to double it up and give a lush presence around the large mirror (or even a doorway or mantel).

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Artist's Rendering

Holiday decor 101: Don't create a hot festive mess

◆ Think separate colours, lots of candles and see-through glass
◆ Resist the urge to make everything red and green ◆ And say no to stripes

You love it when your house is decked out in its holiday finest, reflecting all the good cheer and festive spirit inside. At least, you love it until Dec. 26.

Then you can't stand to look at another candy cane plate.

Smart shopping means choosing items you can use year-round, experts say, then adding little touches and accents to change it up.

This way, you'll end up with items that are usable beyond the season, easily packed away or simply gone.

"With less discretionary income, you have to make your dollars go far, but you

want to decorate for the holidays," says Patty Warwick, vice-president and general merchandise manager of home at Sears.

"What's evolving is a practicality."

At the home of Nicole Sforza, senior home editor at Real Simple, you'll find several clear-glass vases filled with candy, which she likes to separate by colour: green in one container, red in another. "You won't have leftovers. It will all be gone," she promises.

The same vases could have been used last month to hold her Thanksgiving centrepiece of clementines, and they'll hold flowers in the summer and coloured

leaves in early fall.

Coloured candles, which are so easy (and inexpensive) to switch out depending on the occasion, add an inviting glow to the house, especially when it's dark and cold outside, says Ralph Snyder, design director of homes for Kohl's Department Stores.

He recommends clear glass hurricanes to hold the candles, while Sforza might lay an inexpensive mirror on the dining table and put pillar candles on top, surrounded by greenery for Christmas and confetti on New Year's Eve.

Snyder figures you can get year-round use out of one of this season's hottest



► Around the holidays, sofas can get a quick makeover with decorative pillows or throws. Faux-fur throws from Sears.

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trends: a distressed, metallic material called mercury glass that's particularly popular for candleholders.

It has the shine you want for the holiday season, but it's not so gleaming and bright that it would look out of place on an everyday basis, he says.

Snyder suggests investing in the trend of bringing nature inside. That means natural fibres, grey pillows and linens, and blond wood — all of which are easily jazzed up with metallics, red or even more novelty motifs such as snowmen. (Red cardinals will last you longer through the winter

than reindeer or snowmen, he notes.)

"The bigger the piece, the more neutral it should be. The very seasonal items should be small and easy to store — like red napkins, although you could use those on Valentine's Day again," Snyder says.

Real Simple's Sforza thinks white dinnerware is a wise buy because it complements any red-and-green or silver-and-gold themes you might have going on, and an all-white theme can be sophisticated. "It's very festive if you use it all across the board — and it's not cliché."

For that touch of "holiday," she'd go with red or gold (note that's not red AND gold) placemats for the pop of colour. They're easier to store than dishes or glasses.

Don't limit yourself to the dining room though, adds Sears' Warwick.

Guests always seem to work their way into the kitchen, where you can line up holiday-themed mugs for coffee or even all-red dessert plates, she suggests.

Just remember where you put everything for next year.

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Building a fabric headboard

- Headboards are lovely to have, but can be costly to buy
- Why not be a fabric maverick and make one yourself?

DIY IDEAS

As the weather outside gets colder, it leaves more time for indoor projects.

With half a day's time, a drill, and a needle and thread you can turn a piece of plywood into a plush and professional fabric headboard.

This headboard project is taken from Run My Renovation, a show where homeowners allow a room in their home to be transformed according to an online voting process.

Hosts John DeSilvia and Joanie Dodds pull all the elements together to make an amazing room.

Mark and drill the plywood

Mark the centre point of your plywood and use a yardstick to draw a diagonal line across that point with a pencil.

Draw another diagonal line on the opposite side.

Continue the diagonal pattern, marking each point where two lines meet approximately 12 inches apart for the buttons.

Put on safety glasses and use a power drill with a medium bit to drill holes through the pencil-marked spots.

Arrange the fabric and batting

Choose your fabric of upholstery-weight and measure so it is at least six inches longer than the plywood on all sides.

wood on all sides.

Lay the fabric good side down on a sturdy work surface.

Cut the batting to the same size and lay it on top of the fabric.

Top those two layers with a same-size piece of thin batting foam. Centre your plywood evenly on top.

Attach the fabric

Pull the foam, batting and fabric snugly over each corner of the wood and staple it.

Do the same to cover all the hard edges of the board.

Sew on the buttons

Select your buttons in a large size. Secure them to the board with a large needle and upholstery thread.



► A stylish headboard will frame your bed and improve the look of your bedroom.

Hang it

Hang the board equi-distant from the centre of the bed.

Use short screws so the board doesn't tilt out from the wall.

Use a level and anchor if you don't have a wall stud available.

You now have a home-made fabric headboard that can be tailored to any bed-

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SPECIAL INFORMATION FEATURE

Decadent Delight

► Southern Tier Imperial Choklat Stout ideal for pairing with dessert



JEFF O'REILLY
FOR METRO

With a holiday schedule of getting together with friends and family to share quality time to eat and drink — and eat and drink, and eat and drink some more — you can guarantee there will be chocolate, as it has become one of the world's most popular foods and flavours, and is ever present at all special occasions.

Chocolate dates back more than 4,000 years and its name may be derived from the ancient Mayans xocolātl, meaning “bitter water” since, in its natural state, the cacao bean has a strong bitter taste.

The white pulp that surrounds these beans would often be used as a source of sugar in the fermentation of these early alcoholic beverages, and, in fact, most early recordings of chocolate show it as a beverage. Filled with antioxidants and alkaloids, chocolate has been shown to increase serotonin levels, which are linked with feelings of happiness and contentment. What's not to love about it?

I decided to seek out some expert pairing advice

“Filled with antioxidants and alkaloids, chocolate has been shown to increase serotonin levels, which are linked with feelings of happiness and contentment. What's not to love about it?”

with Truffle Treasures owner and respected chocolatier Lara Vaarre, who has garnered a well earned international reputation for her chocolates, truffles and gelatos. Her outstanding palate and unwavering commitment to only using the best ingredients have set her apart as one of the best anywhere.

Southern Tier Imperial Choklat Stout (LCBO 650 ml \$9.85) pours almost pitch black with a thin mocha tan head into a brandy snifter. Huge mouth-watering aromas of well roasted cacao beans with a Tootsie Roll candied sweetness (Vaarre noted a



► Chocolatier Lara Vaarre takes a break from her hectic holiday schedule with a delicious Southern Tier Choklat Stout.

Vidal grape sweetness here) greet the nose, while delicious dark roasted malts, nuts and sweet vanilla, caramel and cherry fruit notes are balanced by an amazingly rich deep dark chocolate bitterness and a slightly chalky and warm-

ing boozy mouth feel that ends with a superb dry finish.

With such pronounced flavours and a whopping 11 per cent alcohol by volume, Choklat is perfect for sharing with dessert. Vaarre recommends pairing with

a raspberry crème brûlée or fresh blackberries, blueberries, raspberries and really ripe strawberries in a sabayon sauce. And the richness and creaminess of her spectacular 35 to 41 per cent milk artisan chocolates would also shine here.

What about Choklat Stout or fresh blackberries, blueberries, raspberries and really ripe strawberries in a sabayon sauce. And the richness and creaminess of her spectacular 35 to 41 per cent milk artisan chocolates would also shine here.

Truffle Treasures has two Ottawa locations — 769 Bank St. in the Glebe and 314 Richmond Rd. in Westboro.



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Slice of info

▶ Triple cream cheeses are soft-surface ripened cheeses that have cream added, giving them a longer shelf life, more solid texture, and higher fat content.

With a week to go until Christmas, my cheese pick this week, Madawaska, is the perfect gift for the hardcore cheese lover on your list.

Back Forty Artisan cheeses are all made from raw sheep's milk and hand-crafted in the kitchen of owner James Keith, who refers to cheesemaking as "magic alchemy." Find his cheeses at select gourmet deli and fine food shops in Ottawa while they last (Murray Market, Serious Cheese or The Piggy Market). Don't forget a small slice for Santa to guarantee an extra checkmark beside your name on the "nice" list

this year.

Madawaska is a little slice of heaven. Rich and luxurious, it reminds of a dense, beautiful piece of cheesecake in both appearance and texture.

The triple cream of sheep's milk cheeses, Madawaska is a semi-soft, surface-ripened raw ewe's milk cheese. With its thick, white, almost crust-like bloomy (fuzzy) rind, and creamy, dense, slightly open paste you will find mushroomy aromas and full, sweet, tangy, milky flavours linger nibble after nibble.

● VANESSA SIMMONS
FOR MORE, SEE SAVVYCOMPANY.CA

A big taste at Big Easy's



A larger than life Blues Brother beckoned us in for seafood at Big Easy's Seafood and Steakhouse the other day.

With high-energy jazz music spilling out onto the street and a colourful mural, it's hard to miss. The restaurant takes its cues from the New Orleans jazz clubs, but its dark interior is elegant in design.

Offering an easy lunch special at just \$10, we got distracted with the plethora of fresh fish and scallop options and ordered the fried oysters. The generous sized oysters were crisp in a light, cornmeal batter and served with a kick-filled Louisiana-style remoulade and beautifully plated on a small spring mix with purple flowers. Rather than the traditional served raw with a squeeze of lemon, we were delighted to try this delicious twist to the fine



▶ Try the savoury Blackened Catfish at Big Easy's served on a bed of sweet potato fries.

dining setting and probably would have eaten more than four.

The attentive server was highly apologetic after we initially ordered the fish of the day (cod) and informed us the chef's special had been changed to Blackened Catfish. (The menu states some items may not be available periodically

since Big Easy's strives for "the freshest fish.")

Being adventurous we weren't disappointed. The large fish fillet was itself mild, but juicy, baked in wonderfully complementary spices like cayenne, oregano and paprika, making it a savoury Cajun dish that delivered just the right level of spiciness.

If you still have room, the vanilla ice cream sundae topped with rich toffee sauce and candied praline pecans isn't really a dessert that should be argued with. Only one vegetarian option is offered.

Big Easy's Seafood and Steakhouse is located at 228 Preston St. For more, see bigeasys.ca.

Celebrate local bounty at farmers' market

Across Europe, holiday bounty is celebrated in Christmas markets. At long last, the Ottawa Farmers' Market is holding one this Sunday.

Just like in German markets, mulled cider and hot Danish doughnuts are snacked on by eager shoppers. You may be surprised to see some fresh produce for sale: Brussel sprouts, beets, cabbages, onions

and squashes keep well in the winter, so you might as well pick up the last of the harvest.

It is primarily a food market, rather than craft sale, with most of the vendors from the Ottawa Valley.

Mathew Shapton of Hall's Apple Market, a regular vendor during the summer, says, "It's been a great experience for us.

People don't have to worry about the weather. We've had great crowds come through and it has nice holiday feel to it."

His family-run stand sells more than 20 varieties of pies, including traditional tortiere and apple raspberry crumble with fruits from their orchard.

Decadent candies from Curly's Cravings (like spicy chocolate almond brittle)

can be packed up for thoughtful presents for the sweet tooth in your family.

Pick up a pre-gift-wrapped bag of local heirloom bean mix from a farmer for your ecologic friend's famous chili recipe. Or why not buy the Christmas roast (venison, pork or even wild boar) directly from organic meat butchers? ● SAMANTHA EVERTS

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Have yourself an appy Christmas

► Banish dull shrimp cocktail in favour of something zestier: Caribbean Shrimp Skewers



► This recipe makes 24 skewers.

Are you a little bored with the same old shrimp cocktail? This year, try something different.

Start with the same easy, pre-cooked shrimp, but this time toss them with a zesty Jamaican-style seasoning blend and skewer them with cubes of tangy mango and cool, crunchy cucumber. Add a touch of zippy pepper and nobody will suffer from yet-another-shrimp-cocktail syndrome.

Preparation:

- 1 In bowl, stir garlic powder, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, thyme, cayenne, black pepper and salt. Pat shrimp dry, then toss in spice mix.
- 2 On 10-cm (4-inch) skewers or picks, place a piece of pepper, then a piece of mango, a piece of cucumber and finally 3

Ingredients:

- 5 ml (1 tsp) garlic powder
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) allspice
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) cinnamon
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) nutmeg
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) dry ginger
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) dried thyme
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) cayenne pepper
- 5 ml (1 tsp) black pepper
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) salt
- 285 g (10 oz) peeled and deveined cooked medium shrimp
- 6 Peppadew peppers, quartered
- 2 mangoes, peeled, cubed
- 1/2 English cucumber, cut in 1/2 moon slices

spiced shrimp. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS, PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, EMILYRICHARDS.COOK.CA**

Weekly Cookbook

750 Best Appetizers

From dips & salads to spreads & shooters



One of the best parts of the festive season is appetizers to serve as friends gather. In that spirit, Toronto food writer Judith Finlayson and chef Jordan Wagman co-authored 750 Best Appetizers: From Dips and Salsas to Spreads and Shooters.

The book has 16 chapters built around specific types of dishes, such as dips, or specific ingredients like cheese.

Among the starters are: tahini dip, shrimp bisque, duck confit quesadilla, and others.

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Foligno adds offence, still offends the opposition



► Senators forward Nick Foligno crumpled Vancouver's Ryan Kesler into the boards in Ottawa last Saturday.

THE HOCKEY NEWS

MURRAY PAM
OTTAWA@METRONews.ca



Just like old K-Tel records, the hits keep on coming for Nick Foligno.

A few weeks ago, the hard-working left-winger became the centre of attention league-wide after scuffling with Sidney Crosby. This past Saturday, he became public enemy No. 1 in Vancouver after laying bone-crushing hits on Canucks Cody Hodgson and Ryan Kesler.

After four seasons of struggling for consistency, shuttling between the sec-

ond and third lines, Foligno is finally living up to the expectations created when he was drafted 28th overall in 2006. Thirty-one games into the current campaign, the 24-year-old is combining gritty play with offensive prowess, something that was sorely lacking early in his career.

Originally not known as a banger, Foligno leads the Senators in hits with 87. A commendable work ethic and ability to successfully win battles along the boards have also become hallmarks.

"It's part of my game," said Foligno. "I am not a dangler or anything like that. When I am not doing that, I am not at my best."

The six-foot, 200-pounder may not see himself as skilled player, but

his one-handed finishing move, a la Peter Forsberg last week versus the Capitals, is first-rate highlight reel material.

During a recent stretch, Foligno displayed his versatility. When linemate Stephane Da Costa was demoted to AHL Binghamton, Foligno was shifted to centre, a position he played sparingly since his junior career with the OHL's Sudbury Wolves. Slotted between Milan Michalek and Daniel Alfredsson, his game surged, as he tallied nine points in 10 games.

Foligno has shifted back to his familiar left-wing since the return of centre Peter Regin a couple of games ago, however he will continue to take draws until Regin's left

shoulder is fully healed.

With 10 goals, 19 points and 37 penalty minutes, the Sudbury native is on pace to easily eclipse season highs in all categories.

He's also forging his own identity. The son of former NHL star Mike Foligno, Nick doesn't have his dad's offensive flair, but doesn't need to in order to be successful. The sweat and inspiration he brings during his 15 minutes of ice time each game are highly valuable.

We'll see in the coming months just how high that value is. A pending restricted free agent who earns \$1.2 million this season, the Sens have to decide whether to pay Foligno like a chart-topper or a K-Tel one-hit wonder.

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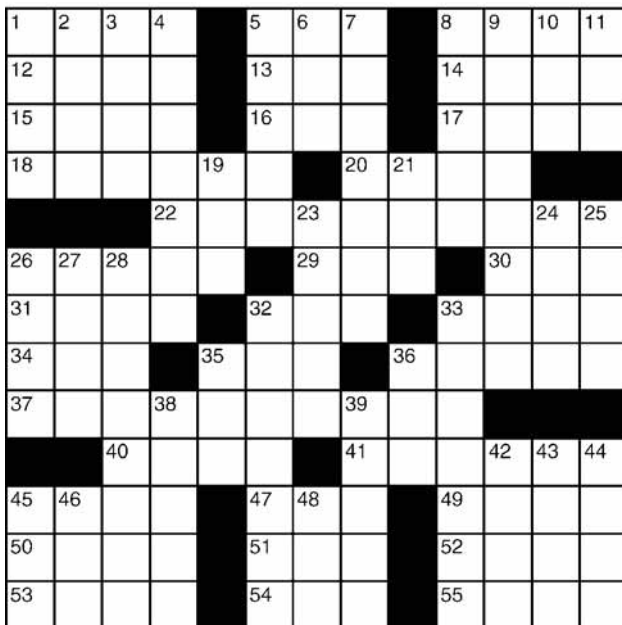
Crossword

Across

- 1 Call a halt to
5 Moreover
8 Spare tire
12 Lima's land
13 Island souvenir
14 Anger
15 Right on the map?
16 Energy
17 It takes the cake
18 Squat down
20 Lounge around
22 Steinway accessory
26 Winter warmer
29 Ostrich's cousin
30 Payable
31 Crazy one
32 Gabor or Mendes
33 Frau's mate
34 Submachine gun
35 Chopping tool
36 Heart line?
37 Weightlifting maneuver
40 Brat's stocking stuffer
41 Meager
45 Met melody
47 Chances, for short
49 Middy
50 Covers
51 A Gershwin
52 Fragrant oil source
53 Versifier
54 Plaything
55 — and crafts

Down

- 1 Detail, for short
2 Rip
3 Approximately
4 Taken advantage of



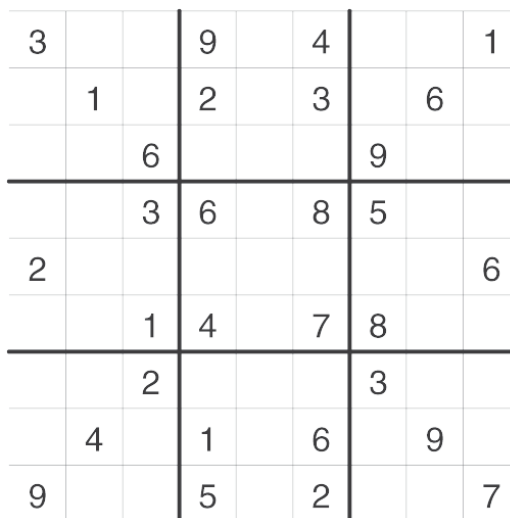
- 5 Greek leader?
6 Born
7 Sheepskin
8 Reached 32 degrees, maybe
9 Light purple shade
10 Time of your life?
11 Quarterback
Roethlisberger
19 Spy novel org.
21 — Dhabi
23 When pigs fly
24 Rudely brief
25 Zeus' consort
26 Organization
27 Leak slowly

- 28 Agree
32 Use
33 Cry of acclamation
35 "Eureka!"
36 Cleo's slayer
38 Move on momentum
39 English homework, maybe
42 Lion's call
43 Type
44 Tackles' teammates
45 Height for Heidi
46 Carnival city
48 Expert

► Yesterday's answer



Sudoku



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Yesterday's answer ►



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Youmattie, You are a dream I do not wish to wake. But if I must wake, let me wake with a Kiss. **TERENCE**

My wonderful Prince Charming, you are my unique and true love! You are my endless love! You are my destiny! I believe that fate has brought us together til the end of time! You are a gift from heaven! and today is my b-day..I am blessed and lucky to be loved by you! Thank you for loving me so much, for your support and in believing and trusting in me... I love you so much.

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Today's horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 So many things are going right for you now that it's like you have a guardian angel watching over you.

♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 An investment you made a long time ago may pay off today.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 Make the effort to remind the people who mean the most to you how much you care for them.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 Take care with your thoughts today, because what you focus on will very soon become your reality. Think only happy thoughts.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug. 23 Cosmic activity in your fellow Fire sign of Sagittarius makes it easy for you to persuade friends and rivals to go you what you need.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24-Sept. 22 If you're not careful, you could find yourself swept away on a tide of other people's negative feelings.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 You will say something outrageous today — and you will be applauded for it.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 If someone says you need to prove your friendship by spending money, you're being taken on ride.

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Whatever target it is you are aiming at, you will hit it with ease.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 You know instinctively that what someone is telling you is a lie. Just turn your back and walk away.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 This is a great day for reaching out to people you have not seen in a while. Renew those old friendships.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. You'll get the opportunity to make a powerful friend today. Don't try to be modest about your talents.

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